Rs. 4966.15 crores during April-May. 1991, thereby registering a growth of 46.6 per cent Sectoral break-down of data is not yet available.

(d) Several changes in trade policy were introduced since July 1991 aimed at strengthening export incentives, eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and rationalising the import tariff structure. Rupee has been made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange. These steps have been furthr consolidated in the new Export Import Policy which, inter-alia, aims at promoting productivity, modernisation and competitiveness of Indian Industry and thereby enhacing its export capabilities.

Technical credit earmarked to export tobacco to Russian Republic

1929. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total technical credit earmarked to export F.C.V. tobacco to Russian Republics;

(b) what is the total requirement thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to fill the gap?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) At the specific request from Russia to enable them to buy tobacco and tobacco products, technical credits of $ 25 million and $ 4 million respectively have been advanced to them by the Government

(b) and (c) Grant of Technical Credit is considered at the request of Russia. No formal request for further grant of technical credit has been received from the Russian Government. Government would favourably consider a further Russian request for technical credit if it is utilised for exports of the balance quantities.

The Government have been impressing upon the Russians to fulfil their export targets to India, so that adequate funds are generated for fulfilling the targets of Indian exports in the trade protocol.

Meeting of tobacco growers with Prime Minister

1930. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an all party delegation met the Prime Minister on the 11th May, 1992 and discussed the problems of tobacco growers of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, what are the contents of the memorandum; and

(c) what were the assurances offered by the Prime Minister as well as Minister of State for Commerce and in what manner they are likely to be implemented?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the memorandum handed over to Prime Minister by the delegation, a number of proposals like purchase of tobacco by STC, removing the stringent grading of tobacco, giving export orders to Andhra Pradesh Tobacco Growers Cooperative Union, fixing of production target, giving more representation to growers in Tobacco Board, fixing MSP by Tobacco Board, setting up of fulfledged agency under Tobacco Board to stabilise market were mentioned.

(c) The position in regard to these suggestions are given below:-

— STC was advised to purchase only if the prices of tobacco fell below the starting prices agreed to betweeen the growers and traders. Since, the average prices at various platforms were above the agreed price level, STC

did not make purchases.

— Proper classification of tobacco is necessary. It is desirable for the smooth conduct of auctions and is beneficial for the farmers in getting better prices. If the bundle is of uniform quality, it will fetch a higher price in the auction bidding.

— The interest of the Andhra Pradesh Tobacco Growers Cooperative Union in getting export orders to Russia has been conveyed to the Russian authorities.

— Tobacco Board has been directed to fix the targets well in advance every year.

— The Tobacco Board Act provides for representation of 6 growers in the Tobacco Board.

— Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) is the competent authority for fixing Minimum Prices. CACP fixes MSP for two basic grades of tobacco in consultation with Tobacco Board. Tobacco Board Act provides for purchase of Tobacco by the Board when the auction prices go below the Minimum Support Prices. In the current auctions in Andhra Pradesh, the tobacco prices are much above the MSP and hence, the Board is not required to intervene in in the auctions

Pre-shipment inspections by Export Inspection Council

1931. SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of pre-shipment inspections made by the Export Inspection Council during the year 1991-92;

(b) the number of commodities seized by the Council during the said period; and

(c) the number of cases registered and initiated for adjudication proceedings against defaulting manufacturers and exporters, and how many certificates of Inspection, issued by the inspection agencies, were cancelled during the year 1991-92?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Five Export Inspection Agencies (EIAs) have been set up under the administrative and technical control of the Export Inspection Council (EIC) for quality control and pre-shipment inspection of commodities notified by the Government under the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act, 1963. During 1991-92 the EIAs carried out 90,813 inspections under the Consignment Wise Inspection System and issued 31,919 inspection certificates under the In-process Quality Control (IPQC) System.

(b) The Export Inspection Council did not seize any commodity during the year 1991-92.

(c) Adjudication proceedings were initiated by the EIC during 1991-92 against one merchant-exporter and one manufacturer-exporter under Section 10 K of the Export (Quality Control & Inspection) Act, 1963 as amended in 1984.

Two certificates of inspection issued by EIA-Calcutta were cancelled during this period under Section 7 (3A) of this Act.

Non-upgradation of posts of Joint Chief Controllers of export and import

1932. SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2618 given in the Rajya Sabha on 17th December, 1991 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the posts of Joint Chief Controllers have not been upgraded so far;